

Books and Storytimes For

Mixed Ages (0-6)



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Tips on Book Selection For Mixed Age Storytimes

- Select books with bright colors and subjects familiar to a young child's world such as families, animals, typical activities like dressing or feeding oneself; or basic concepts such as colors, ABC's, or counting books (not to teach these skills however, rather for enjoyment); also nursery rhyme books
- Share predictable books (sentences repeat, words rhyme, recurring words) that allow for a child to join in; also song picture books
- Pick texts that contain sounds or a rhythmic beat; also song picture books
- Encourage children who can talk to participate by making sounds or joining in on a repeated word or refrain, or by doing motions.
- Pick books that have large illustrations where objects are very distinct and are closely linked to the text
- Pick some books with humorous texts - if preschool children are laughing or are happy, it will have an effect on babies and toddlers
- Use a combination of books that have universal appeal AND some that are at various "listening" levels
- Share books that show children of varying ages and different ethnic backgrounds.
- Pick books you like and share them enthusiastically! Use different voices and sounds.
- At the conclusion of storytime, show, or have a list, or recommend books to parents, particularly if you have a theme, that are appropriate for their child's age level - i.e. board books for babies, simple texts with one or two sentences for two's and three's; longer texts for preschoolers.

Book Suggestions For Mixed Age Storytimes

- Baker, Keith. *Big Fat Hen*. Harcourt Brace, 1994.
- Beaumont, Karen. *No Sleep for the Sheep*. Harcourt, 2011.
- Beaumont, Karen. *Who Ate All The Cookie Dough?* Holt, 2008.
- Cabrera, Jane. *Row, Row, Row Your Boat*. Holiday House, 2014.
- Carle, Eric. *The Very Busy Spider*. Philomel, 1985.
- Carle, Eric. *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. Penguin, 1981.
- Craig, Lindsey. *Farmyard Beat*. Knopf, 2011.
- Cuyler, Margery. *The Little Dump Truck*. Henry Holt, 2009.
- Fleming, Denise. *Mama Cat Has Three Kittens*. Holt, 1998.
- Hacohen, Dean and Sherry. *Who's Hungry?* Candlewick, 2015.
- Rosen, Michael. *The Bus is For Us*. Candlewick, 2015.
- Sayre, April Pulley. *If You're Hoppy*. Greenwillow, 2011.
- Sayre, April Pulley. *Rah, Rah, Radishes!* Beach Lane, 2011.
- Thomas, Jan. *Rhyming Dust Bunnies*. Beach Lane, 2009.
- Zelinsky, Paul. *The Wheels on the Bus*. Penguin, 2015.

Sample Storytime Books

- Allen, Pamela. *Who Sank the Boat?* Puffin, 1996.
- Baker, Keith. *Little Green Peas: A Big Book of Colors*. Beach Lane, 2014.
- Burris, Priscilla. *Five Green and Speckled Frogs*. Scholastic, 2003.

Christelow, Eileen. *Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed*. Clarion, 1998.

Cousins, Lucy. *Hooray for Fish*. Candlewick, 2005.

Craig, Lindsey. *Dancing Feet*. Knopf, 2010.

Dean, James. *Pete the Cat: The Wheels of the Bus*. HarperCollins, 2013.

Dodd, Emma. *Dog's Colorful Day*. Dutton, 2003.

Fleming, Denise. *Five Little Ducks*. Beach Lane, 2016.

Kalan, Robert. *Blue Sea*. Greenwillow, 1992.

Kalan, Robert. *Jump Frog Jump*. William Morrow, 1995.

Hort, Lenny. *The Seals on the Bus*. Holt, 2000.

Lithgow, John. *I Got Two Dogs*. Simon & Schuster, 2008.

Litwin, Eric. *Pete the Cat*. HarperCollins, 2010.

MacDonald, Suse. *Fish, Swish! Splash, Dash! Counting Round and Round*. Little Simon, 2007.

Martin, Bill. *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* Henry Holt, 1992. (Also Board Book, 1996).

Paxton, Tom. *Going to the Zoo*. Morrow, 1996.

Rosen, Michael. *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*. Margaret K. McElderry, 2009.

Van Fleet, Matthew. *Cat*. Simon & Schuster, 2009. Also, *Dog*.

Wilson, Karma. *Bear Counts*. McElderry, 2015

Wilson, Karma. *Bear Shores On*. Margaret K. McElderry, 2002. Series.



Mixed Age Storytimes - Tip Sheet

- Caregivers should attend and participate in all activities and help the baby/toddler act out the rhymes and actions
- Share nursery rhymes, songs and simple finger rhymes and repeat them - young children enjoy repetition.
- Use a lot of music - all ages (especially babies) enjoy music. Consider using more "live voice" singing than recordings - on many recordings the singing is at a faster tempo - with live voice, you can slow it down and children can easily hear the syllables (good for phonological awareness)
- Include more creative dramatics, props and puppets - but not scary ones. Very young children will think puppets are real.
- Young children do not have the fine motor skills to do finger plays as older preschoolers do so adults need to help. Also, finger rhymes should be basic movements like opening and closing hands, pointing to various fingers in countdown rhymes, or using the whole arm in motions.
- Tailor your fingerplays, rhymes, stretches, and songs that will have interest for various developmental levels AND/OR let adults know how each age child can participate.
- Be prepared for chaos ! Expect the unexpected. Some babies & toddlers will watch and listen only, some will participate and some may appear to pay little attention or walkers may attempt to wander around the room
- Mixed age storytimes can be thematically arranged **however** if you do select a theme, make sure that every activity/book related to that theme is developmentally appropriate for all ages
- Adults usually sit in a large semi-circle with their child in front of them or on their lap - make sure no adults are blocking other children's views

- Because children of these various ages are active, use short age-appropriate stories and quick activities that allow for a lot of movement. Also, allow for a lot of participation, at various levels.
- When offering a series of programs, repeat some activities/songs from week to week.

Suggested Template

Opener (Song or Rhyme. Use same opener every week.)

Book Appropriate for Mixed Age Group - Use Longer Story First

Follow with any combination of two activities: Finger Play, Rhyme, Song, Creative Dramatic/Stretch

Book Appropriate for Mixed Age Group- Participation Story if Possible

Follow with any combination of two activities: Finger Play, Rhyme, Song, Creative Dramatic/Stretch - Make sure one activity gets two's & three's up and moving

Book Appropriate for Mixed Age Group- Have a Visual Story if possible

Follow with one activity: Finger Play, Rhyme, Song, Creative Dramatic

Closing Song or Rhyme (Use Same Every Week)

Share Time Optional - open-ended art, music, or other hands-on activity. May provide educational toys for play time.

Please Note: This is just one suggested template - you may develop other models once you are comfortable doing programs, or other suggested models may work better for you. Also, if most children are very restless, you may skip one book or activity.

Always provide a sheet of activities used that day for caregivers to take home and use with children & have a display of appropriate books for the various age levels for them to check-out and/or booklists for suggestions.

Planning Mixed-Age Storytime Programs

Ghoting, Saroj. *Storytimes for Everyone!* ALA, 2013.

Ghoting, Saroj and Kathy Klatt. *STEP into Storytime: Using StoryTime Effective Practice to Strengthen the Development of Newborns to Five-Year-Olds.* ALA, 2014.

Maddigan, Beth. *The Big Book of Stories, Songs, and Sing-Alongs: Programs for Babies, Toddlers, and Families.* Libraries Unlimited, 2003.

Reid, Rob. *Family Storytime.* ALA, 1999.

Reid, Rob. *More Family Storytimes.* ALA, 2008.

Reid, Rob. *Shake and Shout.* Upstart, 2008.

Reid, Rob. *Storytime Slam.* Upstart Books, 2007.

Music Resources

Connors, Abigail Flesch. *101 Rhythm Instrument Activities for Young Children.* Gryphon, 2004.

Kleiner, Lynn. *Kids Make Music, Babies Make Music Too!* Warner Brothers, 1998.

Reid, Rob. *Children's Jukebox.* 2nd ed. ALA, 2007.

Schiller, Pam and Thomas Moore. *And the Cow Jumped Over the Moon!: Over 650 Activities to Teach Toddlers Using Familiar Rhymes and Songs.* Gryphon, 2006.
Also, *Do You Know the Muffin Man?*

TIPS FOR USING MUSIC IN A MIXED-AGE STORYTIME

- Keep songs short (possibly a few less verses than what you would use with a complete group of preschoolers) and within their voice range (one octave or small range)
- Use familiar songs and repeat often
- Sing songs just a little slower
- Emphasize syllables of words (helps with phonological awareness skill)
- Participation should be voluntary
- Include movement or motions with songs
- Movement and motions will probably be different for preschoolers than what babies/toddlers might do//explain variations before doing
- Echo songs are especially great for young children

Suggestions for Rhymes

Flint Public Library. *Ring A Ring O' Roses*. 12th edition. Flint Public Library, 2000.

Low, Elizabeth Cothen. *Big Book of Animal Rhymes, Fingerplays and Songs*. Libraries Unlimited, 2009.

Silberg, Jackie and Pam Schiller. *The Complete Book of Rhymes, Songs, Poems, Fingerplays, and Chants*. Gryphon, 2002.

Schiller, Pam, Rafael Lara-Alecio, and Beverly J. Irby. *The Bilingual Book of Rhymes, Songs, Stories and Fingerplays*. Gryphon, 2004.

Scott, Barbara. *1000 Fingerplays and Action Rhymes: A Sourcebook and DVD*, Neal Schuman, 2010.

Resources for Art, Games & Play

*****Please Note: Several of these resources are for babies and toddlers; the suggestion is that you look through these books for activities – Would it be something preschoolers would also enjoy? If so, then it will be good for a mixed-age group because you already know it is developmentally appropriate for the youngest in your audience.**

Charner, Kathy, Editor. *The Encyclopedia of Infant and Toddler Activities for Children Birth to 3*. Gryphon, 2006.

Hodges, Susan. *Toddler Art*. Totline, 1998.

Kohl, MaryAnn. *First Art For Toddlers and Twos: Open Ended Art Experiences*. Gryphon, 2012.

Kohl, MaryAnn. *Preschool Art: It's the Process, Not the Product!* Gryphon, 1994.

Kuffner, Trish. *The Arts and Crafts Busy Book: 365 Art and Craft Activities to Keep Toddlers and Preschoolers Busy*. Meadowbrook, 2003.

Kuffner, Trish. *The Toddler's Busy Book: 365 Creative Games and Activities to Keep Your 1 ½- to 3-Year-Old Busy*. Meadowbrook Press, 1999.

Schiller, Pam. *The Complete Book of Activities, Games, Stories, Props, Recipes and Dances*. Gryphon, 2003.